

William B. Bottomley

AN
ESSAY
ON
EARLY RISING,
AS IT IS FAVOURABLE TO
HEALTH, BUSINESS, AND DEVOTION:

BY SAMUEL BOTTOMLEY,
SCARBOROUGH.

THIRD EDITION.

"Sweet is the breath of morn, her rising sweet,

"With charm of earliest birds."—

MILTON.

Scarborough:

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1822.

The Author of this brief Essay feels grateful to God and the public for its favourable reception. The longer he has lived the more he has experienced the truth and propriety of the remarks it contains. He flatters himself, with the hope, that this new Edition will be read with profit, when the hand which writes this line shall be mouldered to dust.

Scarborough, 8th Sept., 1821.


The rapid sale of the second edition of this little work has far exceeded the expectations of its author, who, with his gratitude to God and the public, begs leave to insert an extract in this third edition, from the very excellent and well-written life of one whom he dearly loved, and with whom he had the happiness to be personally acquainted, more than half a century. William Hey, Esq. F. R. S. Member of the Royal College of Surgeons in London, &c. &c. written by John Pearson, Esq. F.R.S. F.L.S. M.R.I. &c. &c.—Mr. Hey evinced as much logical precision and metaphysical acumen at the age of eighty-two, as at any period of his life. "Much of the freshness and vigour which he so long retained may be ascribed under the blessing of Divine Providence to his EARLY RISING, his strict habits of temperance, the equanimity of his temper, and to that internal peace, composure, and serenity, which are the concomitants of a holy and devout life." (Vide page 79.)

SAMUEL BOTTOMLEY.

Scarborough,
20th November, 1822.



ESSAY.



TIME is a talent of incalculable value. It is short. What a pity that any of it should be mispent, or suffered to run to waste! Time destroyed, says Dr. Young, is suicide, where more than blood is spilt. Its business, for both worlds, is of the greatest importance. It steals away. To shew its rapid flight, the poets painted it with wings. It never stops its course. It cannot be recalled. It is not yet six thousand years since it commenced, and an Angel hath sworn by him that liveth for ever and ever, that it shall cease and be no longer. Man's pittance of time is altogether precarious. He knows not what a night may bring forth. His life is but a vapour. Many generations have passed away. The present will soon be passed. We are here to day and gone to-morrow. When the end cometh, an empire is inadequate to procure an additional moment. Death-beds need no pastimes. There, if not before, men learn the worth of time. To kill the idle hour they no more send for the card-party, the newsmonger, the buffoon, or the dancing-master; but they call in the Doctor, the Minister, and perhaps the pious neighbour. Alas! many learn the worth of time from its loss. May the reader of this Essay learn its value, by improving it as it passes, in laying up a treasure for eternity.

The exhortation to redeem time was well worthy the great Apostle who gave it, and richly merits universal attention. It

means to buy back, or buy up, the fleeting opportunity, for doing the one thing needful. The world, satan, sin, sloth and carnal pleasures bid for our time, but we must redeem it out of their hands. All time is precious, but the choicest moments are those redeemed from sleep, by early rising.

It must not be supposed that this brief Essay is intended as an invective against sleep. The writer has experienced the want of it, and knows its worth. It is tired nature's sweet restorer, and justly stiled *balmy* sleep. The sleep of a labouring man, says Solomon, is sweet. This blessing is matter of divine promise to those who keep sound wisdom and discretion; they shall lie down, and their sleep shall be sweet. Prov. 3. 24. There was a time when even the weeping prophet Jeremiah could say I awaked and beheld, and my sleep was sweet unto me. Jer. 31. 26. Sleep is the gift of God. He giveth his beloved sleep. The Psalmist was in a comfortable frame when he could say, I will both lay me down in peace and sleep: for thou, Lord, only makest me dwell in safety. The want of sleep, like that of appetite, is often either a disease or the effect of some calamity. When Jesus said to his disciples, our friend Lazarus sleepeth, as they understood his meaning, their remark *if he sleep he shall do well*, was not incorrect.

Thanks are due to the Deity, as well for sleep in the night-season, as for meat and drink in the day time. It is not therefore *sleep*, but the needless, injurious *excess* of it, against which this Essay is intended to militate. We may say of sleep, as of meat and drink, it is necessary for life. To preserve a comfortable existence we must eat and drink every day; but who can be so ignorant as not to know, that some injure their health, and hasten a premature old age and death, by eating to

gluttony, and drinking to intoxication? In such cases, the design of eating and drinking is lamentably defeated. It is then from the *abuse* of sleep that Solomon calls the Sluggard, saying How long wilt thou sleep O Sluggard? When wilt thou arise out of thy sleep? Go to the ant, thou Sluggard; consider her ways and be wise. What saith the Sluggard to this? He saith, *yet a little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to sleep.* It is his *love* of sleep which brings him to poverty and shame. Prov. 6. 9, 10, 11. Chap. 20. 13.

Let it be remembered further, that the practice of early rising is not urged as separate from *good designs* in so doing; hurtful as excessive sleep may be, both to the mind, body and estate, it is not so bad as rising early to commit wickedness: Woe, saith the prophet Micah, to them that devise iniquity, and work evil upon their beds! When the morning is light they practice it, because it is in the power of their hand, Micah, 2. 1. They who rise betimes to pick and steal, or who leave their beds to visit the tavern, dram-shops, and ale-houses, had better keep their beds, as thereby they would not go quite so fast to poverty, death and hell. Solemn is the woe pronounced by the prophet Isaiah against those who rise up early in the morning that they may follow strong drink. Isa. 5. 11. It is too bad to be drunken in the night; but they who get drunk in the morning, rush to their own destruction. The *design* therefore is the principal thing in the business of early rising. Among the objects worthy the pursuit of rational beings, and for the attainment of which early rising is peculiarly advantageous, I would particularly notice the following.

1st. The health of the body. Of all temporal blessings, this is universally allowed to be pre-eminent. For its preser-

vation, and especially for its restoration, what labours have been spent in the study of Anatomy! Botany! Chemistry! and Physic! what volumes have been penned and published on the art of healing, and to prevent diseases! To obtain and secure the blessing of health, what sums have been paid! What journies and voyages have been taken! In times of sickness, what prayers have been offered to the God of mercy, for patience and a happy issue out of all afflictions! On recovery, how gratefully have some gone to the house of God to render thanks in the public congregation! It is not easy to appreciate the great worth of bodily health. It is of that high consideration, that in proportion as it fails, all things, but itself, sink in value. From its loss its worth is learnt. Without it what can a man do! If he have ever so much business, it must be left. When he is sick, he is off work. Disease puts him past labour. Instead of using his tools he needs the attendance and sympathy of friends. And what can he bear? In the vigour of health and spirits he may endure vexations and disappointments; but when the whole frame becomes enfeebled by the oppressive operation of disease, trifles overwhelm. In the want of health what can any one enjoy? What is a sumptuous table, however delicately spread with dainties, to him who has a palled and sickly stomach! What is purple, or fine linen, or the most costly and gorgeous apparel to that body which is pining in sickness and tortured in Agony! At such a season, what enjoyment can be expected from the convivial meetings of the most fashionable circles! What are the best of beds to those who burn in fevers, who are turning from side to side, and saying in their anguish, when will it be light? What an invaluable blessing is health! who can be too grateful for so great a favour! Surely it is better than money and all that money can purchase! Then, with the greatest care, let it be preserved.

That excess of sleep is prejudicial to health, surely none can doubt. Not one of the whole College of Physicians dispute it in the least. They all agree that the indolent practice generates diseases, which the skill of men and power of medicine cannot otherwise remove, but by changing the course by which they were produced. The sluggish habit prevents the salubrious circulation of all the fluids; at the same time it relaxes the solids and enfeebles the fibres: it likewise unbraces the nerves, injures the appetite, and greatly impairs all the digestive powers. It frequently brings on a melancholy train of nervous affections and lowness of spirits, which fail not to fill the mind with such gloomy imaginations and frightful fancies, as devour its comforts, and almost render life itself an intolerable burthen. If such be the effects of the idle indulgence, who, in the exercise of reason, would have it continued!

But by what course may the coming of such dreadful maladies be prevented? Or if they be come already, what means, with the best hope of success, may be used for their removal? I reply, the most effectual way will be to rise early and take exercise in the open and free air. In behalf of this way, both reason and experience unite their attestation. Men of sense and science all admit, that the attempt to remove disease by the opposite course to that which produced it, is perfectly rational. Experience has proved in numberless instances, that however salutary may have been the judicious application of medicines, all have failed of complete success, especially in nervous cases, if not accompanied with early rising, air and exercise. In medicine, as in meat, drink and dress, one kind may be substituted for another, but neither the Druggists' nor the Apothecaries' shops will be found to contain a substitute for early rising, morning air and exercise. Were

it needful, the writer of this Essay, could say much from his own observation—he could with truth affirm, that after twenty years experience of the inefficacy of medicines to preserve his health, he has for twenty years more, happily enjoyed, by persevering in the practice he here recommends, better health than he had in his youth, while the use of medicine has been almost wholly superseded.

Would the reader then enjoy himself? Would he give a relish to his food, and be fitted for the labours of the day? Let him not spend his mornings in yawning upon his bed: Let him rise betimes, and if possible, get out of the smoke, into the open fields, to hear the winged choristers, how the wakeful Lark warbles her matin songs as she mounts aloft: let him observe the grazing herds, and the bleating flocks, with all the charms of rural life; thus he will exercise his limbs, brace his nerves, regale his senses, exhilarate his spirits, and breathing the salubrious breath of morn, will greatly invigorate his whole frame.

2nd. Expedition and success in business are among the valuable objects to be promoted by early rising. Most men are men of some kind of business, and will agree that business must be minded. They who are not busy bodies in other men's matters, will mind their own business; and whether it be in the field or in the garden, in the ropery or the factory, in the study, the warehouse, the school or the shop, or wherever else, it will require time, and the morning is found the best time for all business. Who has not heard, or heard and not believed the common saying, "One hour in the morning is worth two at night?" Who need be told that if he lose an hour in the morning he feels the want of it all the rest of the day? He who

keeps his bed when he should go to the field, who is asleep when he should be at work, who thinks his own business not worth his own minding, may be disappointed in his expectations, that others will mind it for him as it ought to be minded. Though the battle be not always to the strong, neither the race to the swift, nor riches to the diligent, in general they are so. It is written in the proverbs of Solomon, that the soul of the Sluggard desireth, and hath nothing; but that the hand of the diligent maketh rich; that the hand of the diligent shall bear rule; that the soul of the diligent shall be made fat; and moreover, that the substance of a diligent man is precious. Seest thou a man diligent in his business? He shall stand before kings. With the Sluggard it is not so. It must be the reverse. The gift of prophecy is not requisite to foresee, and foretell the fatal issue of that business, the management of which is marked by the ruinous course of sluggish negligence.

3rd. In addition to these weighty and important objects, to the attainment of which early rising is peculiarly advantageous, we may notice another, which is greater than all: It is the exercise of that sacred devotion which is inseparably connected with everlasting salvation. Momentous as worldly business, and valuable as bodily health unquestionably may be, both the one and the other diminish into trifles, when compared with the eternal salvation of the soul. According to the judgment of him who made the world, and must know its worth, and who redeemed the soul, and cannot be ignorant of its value, it would profit a man nothing, were he to gain the whole world, and by so doing, lose his own soul. What can a man give in exchange for his soul? The soul is the chief concern. It did not come from the dust; nor shall it, like the body, return to the dust again. It is the breath of God; and when

it leaves the body, it returns to God who gave it. There is nothing here that suits its spiritual essence, or satisfies its immense desires. Its redemption could not be effected by corruptible things, such as silver and gold. The blood of bulls and goats could not atone for its sins. They required a sacrifice of nobler name and richer blood. Nothing less would suffice than the blood of the incarnate God. He purchased the Church with his own blood. Acts, 20. 28. It was for its salvation that the Lord Jesus laid aside the glory which he had with the father before the foundation of the world; that he clothed himself in a body like our own; that in it he fulfilled all righteousness, endured the contradiction of sinners against himself, agonised in Gethsemane, and expired on mount Golgotha. The soul is that which men cannot kill. Its nature is immortal. Its salvation is endless bliss, yea, everlasting glory. But its loss is the never-dying worm, and the unquenchable flame of the fire of Hell. What a dreadful thing must that be, which can destroy body and soul in Hell for ever! What a valuable consideration must that be, which can prevent such loss, and secure endless happiness! Who would not leave his bed in pursuit of an object so grand! Numbers rise early, and late take rest, in quest of objects not to be compared with this. What toilsome labours are wrought to obtain the bread that perisheth! What perils and painful struggles have been endured, by sea and land, to conquer men! What study and contrivance, caution, intrepidity and exertion have some displayed, to make their escape from foreign captivity! What little things are these compared with the bread which endureth unto eternal life—with the conquest of the flesh, the world, the devil and death—with the glorious liberty and endless felicity of the children of God! What folly and stupidity must possess the man, who idles away the fleeting hours which might be

spent in fellowship with God, and preparation for the kingdom of heaven! The mariners who should sleep in their hammocks, while their ships were getting among rocks, or the men who would keep their beds when assured their houses were on fire, would not act so inconsistent a part as they do, who will not leave their beds to save their souls. What is the ship, or the house, or the body, compared with the immortal spirit! If the soul be lost, it is lost for ever. Eternity will be the duration of its torments. If it be saved, its joys will be replete, uninterrupted, and for ever. Then what meanest thou, O Sleeper? Arise, call upon thy God. Shall the busy bee improve the shining hours? Shall the little ant labour and tug for one poor grain? and wilt not thou bestir thyself to secure a never-fading crown? Awake, awake; shake off dull sloth. Leave thy bed to seek thy God.

The practice of early rising comes most strongly recommended by the voice of nature—of Scripture—and the examples of the very best of characters.

1st. The voice of nature pleads. All her operations are carried on with the greatest regularity. Every thing is done in its proper season. If we look to the heavens, the unwearied sun every morning calls upon us to rise and work while it is day. He keeps his steady course, shining as he moves, to teach us to proceed in like manner. If we look upon the earth, or round about us, we perceive, that in the morning the grass is growing—the rivers are running—the tides are ebbing or flowing—the birds are singing—the herds are feeding—all nature seems quite alive. But the indulgent sluggard is as dead while he lives.

The pleadings of the classics, both heathens and christians, the former in concord with nature which they studied; the latter with the Scriptures which they believed, are all in favour of *early rising*. The poetic lines of Virgil, which on this subject have charmed many, are not inapposite here to be inserted.

Luciferi primo cum sidere, frigida rura
Carpamus : dum mane novum, dum gramina canent,
Et ros in tenera pecori gratissimus herba est.*

VIRG. GEORG. III. lines 324, 325, 326.

How appropriate and pertinent to the like purpose, are the admired lines of Milton !

“ Sweet is the breath of morn, her rising sweet,
“ With charm of earliest birds : pleasant the sun,
“ When first on this delightful land he spreads
“ His orient beams, on herb, tree, fruit, and flower,
“ Glittering with dew.”

PARADISE LOST, BOOK III.

The morning, so friendly to the muses, is the best time for making advances in all the christian graces. When the body is refreshed with sleep—When the memory, the senses, and all the faculties are most acute—Before the cares of the world have engrossed, bewildered and confused the mind—Then—then is the season for devotion—That is the precious opportunity for

* Before the Sun while Hesperus appears,
First let them sip from herbs the pearly tears
Of morning dews, and after break their fast
On green-sward ground—a cool and grateful taste.

DRYDEN.

cultivating the understanding in the knowledge of divine things, for storing the memory with the histories, the promises, and the precepts of the sacred Scriptures. Then is the best time for praising God for those mercies which are new every morning—for asking his forgiveness of past offences, his guidance and his aid through the business, the dangers, and the difficulties of the day. In a word, it is the best time for the enjoyment of the highest entertainment in the universe, which is *communion with God the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ.*

2nd. The language of Scripture perfectly accords with the voice of nature and reason in their call to early rising. Every thing written in the sacred volume, concerning the *value*, the *brevity*, the *uncertainty*, and the *momentous* business of time, contains a call to rise betimes. All that is said of *diligence*, of *watchfulness*, and particularly of the *redemption* of time, re-iterates the same call. Time's improvement is utterly incompatible with its lavish waste in long protracted sleep.

Of the two Lambs to be offered day by day continually, it was particularly enjoined that one of them should be offered in the *morning*. Exod. 29. 38, 39. When Moses was called to meet God in the mount, he was expressly ordered to be ready in the *morning*, and in the *morning* to go unto mount Sinai, there to meet his maker. Exod. 34. 2. It is worthy to be remembered that the Manna in the wilderness was to be gathered in the *morning*; and that the voice of wisdom, which is none other but the voice of God, speaks in divers ways and manners to the sons of men, saying, those that seek me *early* shall find me. Prov. 8. 17. In addition to all may be added

3rd. The examples of the wisest and best of men now living or that have lived. Abraham, the friend of God and father of

the faithful, gat up *early* in the morning to stand before the Lord. He rose up *early* in the morning and saddled his ass, to go with his son Isaac into the land of Moriah, to offer him there for a burnt offering. Gen. 19. 27. Chap. 22. 3. His son Jacob, that noted pilgrim, whose name sometimes stands for the whole Church of God, was a very early riser. He would be up betimes to erect a grateful monument for the mercies of the night. Gen. 28. 18. We have heard how Moses was ordered to be ready in the morning, and we know how cheerfully he obeyed. His renowned successor, who resolved that whatever others did, he and his house would serve the Lord; and did it accordingly, was remarkable for early rising. He would not indulge in bed to the injury of his health, to the neglect of business and devotion, but would be up and embrace the first and fittest opportunity for the work he had to perform. It deserves to be remarked and remembered, how particularly and repeatedly this circumstance is mentioned in the book of Joshua. And Joshua rose *early* in the morning. Jos. 3. 1. And Joshua rose *early* in the morning. Jos. 6. 12. So Joshua rose up *early* in the morning. Jos. 7. 16. And Joshua rose up *early* in the morning. Jos. 8. 10. His early rising to pursue the civil and sacred duties incumbent upon him, shows how intent he was upon the due discharge of them, and that the love of sleep and carnal ease, those great impediments in the christian race, did not domineer in him. Job, also, that pattern of piety and patience, as is written of him, rose up *early* in the morning to offer sacrifices. Job. 1. 5. To the honour of Elkanah and his family, it is recorded in the sacred page, that they rose up in the morning *early* and worshipped before the Lord. 1 Sam. 1. 19. The conduct of the Psalmist David is recorded by himself in his book of Psalms—Says he, I *prevented* the dawning of the morning and cried, Ps. 119. 147. To *prevent* here, does not mean to hinder, but to anticipate or go before; his words mean

that he prayed fervently and early, before the dawning of the day, or the rising of the sun. He said to his God, my voice shalt thou hear in the morning, O Lord; in the morning will I direct my prayer unto thee. Ps. 5. 3. In another psalm he said to the Lord, I will sing aloud of thy mercy in the morning. Ps. 59. 16.

But above all examples, be that of Christ our pattern and our guide. He kept pace with his time, working while it was day, till he had finished the work which had been given him to do. He was very *early* in a solitary place, on purpose to pray. Mark says, "in the morning, rising up a great while before day; he went out into a solitary place, and there prayed." Mark, 1. 35. It is further recorded of him, that *early* in the morning he went into the temple and that all the people came to hear him. Luke, 21. 38. John, 8. 2. His followers in ancient days were not unmindful to follow his bright example in this important respect. In about the year of our Lord 107, Pliny, in a letter to the Emperor Trajan, concerning the christians of that day, states among other circumstances concerning them, "that they were wont upon a solemn day to meet together *before sun-rise*, and to sing among themselves a hymn to Christ, as the God whom they worshipped." In behalf of early rising it would be easy to swell the pages of this pamphlet by clouds of witnesses of its vast utility, selected both from among the living and the dead. Numbers, together with the writer of these lines, can subscribe their *probatum est*. The biographical registers of ancient and modern believers abound with instances fully demonstrative. One note extracted from Dr. Doddridge's Family Expositor may suffice. When paraphrasing on Rom. 13. 13. says the great and good Doctor, "I will here record the observation, which I have found of great use to myself, and to which I may say, that the produc-

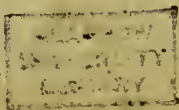
tion of this work, and most of my other writings, is owing; viz. that the difference between rising at five and at seven o'clock in the morning, for the space of forty years, supposing a man to go to bed at the same hour of the night, is nearly equivalent to the addition of ten years to his life, of which, (supposing the two hours in question to be so spent,) eight hours every day should be employed in study and devotion."

What cause have many to regret the loss of so much precious time, spent in hurtful sleep! How have they suffered thereby both in mind, body and estate! *How* many have bewailed on a dying bed their wasted hours not to be recalled! But, *early rising* to seek the Lord never gives pain. It is pleasing in prospect, sweet in enjoyment, and delightful in review.

If there be so much reason, duty, interest and example on the side of early devotion, what cause have many professing christians to blush at wasting their mornings in bed! The thoughts of Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of James, so early at the sepulchre of their deceased Saviour, may put to shame the backwardness of those who refuse to rise to seek a risen Saviour, with the things above, where he now sitteth at the right hand of God. Even the early matins of Baal's worshippers chide the delays of sluggish souls. * Solemn but just is the thought, that if men *will* not rise from their beds *now* to call upon God, the day is coming and will not tarry, when they *must* arise from their graves to give up their accounts to the great searcher of all hearts.

* It is worthy of remark that the worshippers of Baal rose betimes to offer their matins. They called on the name of Baal from morning even until noon. 1 Kings, 18. 26. Moses too was directed to give Pharaoh the meeting in the morning at the river's brink, when and where he was wont to go, as I suppose, to worship the river. Exod. 7. 15.

Sedman and Weddill, Printers, Scarborough.



THE FADING LEAF.

THE SUBSTANCE

OF A

SERMON,

DELIVERED IN SALEM CHAPEL, GREAT DOVER ROAD,
LONDON, OCT. 2, 1829,

ON OCCASION OF

THE DEATH OF MRS. ANN BRADSHAW,

WIFE OF THE REV. THOMAS BRADSHAW,

MINISTER OF THE ABOVE CHAPEL.

AND ALSO IN THE THISTLE LODGE, UNION STREET,
DUNDEE, DEC. 12, 1830.

BY JABEZ BURNS,

MINISTER OF THE GOSPEL.

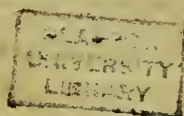
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M.DCCC.XXXI.

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SERMON.

We do all fade as a leaf.—ISAIAH lxiv. 6.

THE Scriptures abound with striking declarations of the brevity and uncertainty of human life ; hence we find it compared to a dream—a cloud—a vapour—a shadow—a hand's breadth—a tale that is told—to the swiftness of the eagle—the rapid messenger—the weaver's shuttle—the withering grass—and the perishing flower. But is it necessary that an event so certain, and an event which none are inclined to doubt, should require statement upon statement in order to gain that attention which it seriously demands ? It is. Man is a creature sinful and mortal, standing in jeopardy every hour, and yet he lives as thoughtless and unconcerned as if immortality was inscribed on the present

state of being ; hence the Psalmist prayed, "so teach us to number our days that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom." Psalm cx. 12. Job also seems desirous of impressing the same subject upon our attention when he asserts, that "man that is born of a woman is of few days, and full of trouble. He cometh forth like a flower, and is cut down : he fleeth also as a shadow, and continueth not." Job xiv. 1, 2. In the text the prophet refers us to a monitor, who annually teaches us the same solemn and important lesson, "we do all fade as a leaf." Let us illustrate and improve the subject.

I. Illustrate the solemn fact asserted.

1. The fate of cities and empires confirms it. Where are now those extensive empires, those magnificent cities which were once the glory of the Eastern world ? Where is Babylon, with its gates of brass, its walls, its towers, its gardens, its palaces, and temples ? The voice has long since been heard with respect to it. Babylon is fallen, fallen, fallen ! Where is Nineveh, that great and populous city ? Alas ! it has become a heap of desolation. Where is Athens, the ancient seat of

learning and of glory? The crown has fallen from her head, and her grandeur is exchanged for an unsightly heap of ruins. Where is Jerusalem itself, the far-famed city of the great king, with its splendid temple, the resort of the chosen tribes? Alas! Ichabod has long since been written upon it, her foundations have been razed, and she has been literally ploughed up. And what do these things teach us? but that the fashion of this world passeth away, and that all is fading as the leaves of autumn.

2. This fact is also applicable to families. Where is the house that has not at one time or another been made to feel the force of the text. In one family you see the disconsolate widow mourning the loss of her companion and friend. In another you behold an Ezekiel listening to the heart-rending address, "Son of man, behold I take away the desire of thine eyes with a stroke." In a third Rachael is weeping for her children, and refuseth to be comforted, because they are not. Again the voice of sighing attracts your attention, it escapes from a man who is bereaved of the object of his ardent affection. "Lover and friend thou has put from me,

and mine acquaintance in darkness." Indeed, where is the family but who have had to adopt the language of the sorrowing Patriarch, "give me a burying-place among you, that I may bury the dead out of my sight." And do not these things confirm the sentiment in the text, that "we do all fade as the leaf?"

3. Individuals fade as the leaf, and that in a variety of respects.

BEAUTY is but a superficial tincture, a dew-drop of the morning, which the rising sun exhales. One afflictive hour consumes it as the moth; alters the appearance of the features, makes the sparkling eye dull, the ruddy cheek pale, and the beautiful countenance loathsome and disgusting to the beholder.

STRENGTH "fades as the leaf." How soon is the strongest man brought low; the man who can boast of a constitution naturally robust and healthy, bones like brass, whose whole system is clothed with strong muscular power, yet this man cannot resist the attack of disease for a year, no, nor yet perhaps a single day, before he feels himself robbed of his strength, and debility affecting the whole man.

The POWERS OF THE MIND also fade. The

memory fails, genius is blunted, and the man who could once engage in the most arduous and dangerous undertakings, finds himself bereft of his courage, and he becomes timid and fearful; the grasshopper is a burden, and he is afraid of that which is high. And do we not often see the mind become puerile or childish after the frosts of winter have scattered their hoar upon the aged head?

Life itself "fades as the leaf." What is life but one moving scene; like the day, it has its morning, its noon, and evening. Like the year, it has its spring of youth, when the bud is opening, when all is green and fertile, when the blade appears above the earth, when the day is extending itself, and when the voice of the feathered choristers is heard from every hill and vale. Then follows the summer of maturity; now the day is at its full length, nature teems with the ripening fruits, and all bears some marks of perfection; but summer terminates in declining autumn. Then the fruits are gathered in, the flower perishes, the day declines, and the leaf fades. Mark the progress of the fading of the leaf; it first loses its green appearance, then its moisture, then wears a withered form, and

hangs trembling on the stalk until the wind passeth over it, and it falls to the ground. In like manner, old age causes the beautiful countenance to wither, robs the constitution of its moisture, till at length the breath of mortality passes over it, and it mingles with the clods of the valley; then the winter of death and the darkness of the tomb are its portion.

This, my beloved friends, is the case when life is extended to old age; but you have repeatedly seen the new-formed leaf in spring perish by the untimely blast, and often the rays of a summer's sun are too powerful, and the leaf falls a victim to its scorching influence. So it is with life; it is often flattering in its commencement, and then prematurely terminates in the cold dark grave. Others reach the meridian of their days; and whilst their breasts are full of milk and their bones full of marrow, they are called to go hence, and their sun goes down while it is yet day.

Finally, Mark, on this part of our subject, the universality of this fact, "*we do all* fade as a leaf."

None are exempt from the changes of life or the stroke of mortality. The sentence is

gone forth, and it extends to your speaker, and to every hearer in this vast assembly, “dust thou art, and unto dust thou shalt return.”

1. Dignity avails not. The monarch must descend from the throne, lay aside the trappings of state and the ensigns of royalty, and lie down with the peasant in his death.

2. Riches avail not. The man of wealth finds death too firm to be bribed, and is convinced at last that he has been gathering for others to scatter after his decease.

3. Wisdom avails not. The man of learning pursues the same paths of changing nature, with the illiterate and way-faring man. Poets, philosophers, and divines, have all practically taught us in their turn, that we fade as the leaf.

4. Youth avails not. The infant expires with the sire; and in the grave, youth and age mingle their remains together.

5. Piety avails not. Piety which dignifies, which exalts to the enjoyment of the purest blessings, which kindles in the breast the fire of love divine, and which gives a prospect of everlasting felicity, is no antidote to the ravages of disease or the attack of death. The

patriarchs, the prophets, the apostles, where are they? their knowledge, their piety, their usefulness distinguished them in this life, but did not make them invulnerable to the changes of mortality.

II. Let us improve the subject.

Do we all fade as the leaf? then, learn,

1. The evil nature of sin. What is the cause of our fading? My friends, there is a worm at the root; human nature was corrupted at the fountain-head and all the streams have partaken of that corruption. Sin is the fatal cause of all our changes: had it not been for this, beauty would never have dwindled into the deformities of age, nor life have terminated in the region of the tomb.

2. Admire the boundless goodness of God. We must all fade and die, but God has mercifully provided an antidote to death in the death of his Son. Yes, Christ has abolished death, and brought life and immortality to light by the gospel,—yea, more than this, by his blessed resurrection he has ensured the resurrection of the human race, and the body sown in the grave, a weak, natural, corruptible body, shall at last be raised powerful,

spiritual, and incorruptible. For he shall change our vile bodies, and make them like unto his own glorious body, &c. Philip. iii. 21.

3. Be careful to secure an interest in the death of Christ. Christ is the only refuge from the ills of life, and from the storms of eternity,—his blood alone can cleanse the human heart from the stains of sin, and his righteousness alone can render you acceptable to that being who is clothed with holiness, and who cannot behold sin with any allowance, and faith in Christ is the appointed medium of salvation. Believe on him, and you shall be washed, justified, and made fully meet for the joys of heaven,—rest on this rock, and you may defy storms, and winds, and tempests; for, while they scatter desolation around, you shall remain firm and unmoved as the rock which sustains you. Believe in Christ, and all the blessings of the everlasting covenant shall be yours, for all are yours, ye are Christ's, and Christ is God's.

4. Make yourselves familiar with this plain fact. Often think upon the changes to which you are subject—think on the days of darkness which are before you—meditate upon the shroud, the axe, the spade, the coffin,

the silent grave; thoughts like these would make you sober amidst the intoxicating scenes which surround you—thoughts like these would assist you to attend to the injunction of the apostle, to buy as though you bought not—those who have wives to be as though they had none, &c. Thoughts like these would enhance the value of the volume of revelation, and you would grasp it with an eager hand, as the only directory through life, and the only lamp to cheer you in the night of death.

5. Live daily for heaven. Remember that the text has no meaning there. The thrones there have no successors, the crowns fade not, the garments wax not old, there is no succession of day and night,

“For God, the Sun for ever reigns,
And scatters night away.”

No autumnal changes,

“For everlasting spring abides,
And never withering flowers.”

There all is fixed—fixed in bliss serene—no tear was ever known to bedew the cheek of an inhabitant of heaven—sighing is done away, and all is perpetual sunshine, joy and peace. Do cities fade? that city retains all

her original magnificence. Do families fade? that family was never divided by death. Does beauty fade? there beauty flourishes in immortal bloom. Does strength? No. Weakness is unheard of and unknown. Life? No. It is the region of life, there is the tree of life, the waters of life; and because the Saviour lives, and lives for ever—his people shall live also.

To conclude. Sinner, remember the text has no meaning in the perdition into which sin, if not forsaken, will inevitably plunge thee. The gulph is an unchanging gulph—the darkness is never succeeded by one ray of light—the worm dieth not—the fire is never quenched—eternity is inscribed upon the whole. Listen then to the voice of mercy—hasten to the refuge before thee. Secure, I again entreat thee, whatever thou neglectest—secure an interest in the Saviour's blood.

Our text is a short one, easily remembered. Let it have a constant place in your memories, and may it have a salutary influence on your hearts. Amen.

THE LEAF.

"We all do fade as a leaf." Isa. lxiv. 6.

1.

See the leaves around us falling,
 Dry and wither'd, to the ground ;
 Thus to thoughtless mortals calling,
 In a sad and solemn sound :—

2.

Sons of Adam, once in Eden,
 Blighted when like us he fell ;
 Hear the lecture we are reading,
 'Tis, alas ! the truth we tell.

3.

Virgins, much, too much presuming
 On your boasted white and red ;
 View us late in beauty blooming,
 Number'd now among the dead.

4.

Gripping misers, nightly waking,
 See the end of all your care ;
 Fled on wings of our own making,
 We have left our owners bare.

5.

Sons of honour, fed on praises,
 Flutt'ring high in fancied worth ;
 Lo ! the fickle air that raises,
 Brings us down to parent earth.

6.

Learned Sophs, in systems jaded,
 Who for new ones daily call ;
 Cease at length, by us persuaded,
 Ev'ry leaf must have its fall !

7.

Youths, tho' yet no losses grieve you,
 Gay in health and manly grace ;
 Let not cloudless skies deceive you,
 Summer gives to Autumn place.

8.

Venerable Sires, grown hoary,
 Hither turn th' unwilling eye ;
 Think, amidst your falling glory,
 Autumn tells a winter night.

9.

Yearly in our course returning,
 Messengers of shortest stay ;
 Thus we preach this truth concerning,
 " Heav'n and earth shall pass away."

10.

On the Tree of Life eternal,
 Man, let all thy hope be staid ;
 Which alone, for ever vernal,
 Bears a leaf that shall not fade.

BISHOP HORNE.

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